



8.16.10

Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie

Welcome Center Hours 8 am-4:30 pm (Mon-Sat)

30239 South State Route 53

Wilmington, IL 60481

Phone: 815-423-6370

<http://www.fs.fed.us/mntp>

Midewin Meadowlark Messenger Aug-Sept 2010

Here's what the bird is bringin'

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Please be aware that on **AUGUST 23, 2010** construction will begin to add turning lanes to enter the Midewin Supervisors Office/Headquarters from Route 53 (SO). The contract is a 30 day contract but it's for Monday through Friday and weather dependant, so it's possible it could stretch into 3 months.

Our access will be maintained throughout the construction period but we **will be inconvenienced**. The median will be closed to expedite work. There will be some re-routing to access Midewin's driveway.

Be careful and prepared for heavy equipment being active here. Barricades and flaggers will be posted.

☆ Calendar of Volunteer Workdays/ Events for Aug-Oct

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Date and Day	Time	Meeting Location	Activities
21 August 2010 Saturday	9:00 am – 2:30pm	River Road Seed Beds	Restoration Workday: Installing prairie plant plugs at River Road. <i>Free T-shirts provided by The Wetlands Initiative.</i>
26 August 2010 Thursday	8:00 am - Noon	Midewin SO (Horticulture Bldg)	Restoration Workday: Invasive Plant Control <i>Free T-shirts provided by The Wetlands Initiative.</i>
28 August 2010 Saturday	10:00am - 2:00pm	Midewin SO (Welcome Center)	Ghosts of the Ammunition Plant Tour
4 September 2010 Saturday	8:30 am	Call main line for meeting location	History on Horseback: <i>Bring your own horse</i>
4 September 2010 Saturday	10:00 am	Hoff Road Trailhead	Midewin Photo Tour
11 September 2010 Saturday	9:00 am – 2:30pm	River Road Seed Beds	National Day of Service: We'll be installing prairie plants at River Road, and collecting some early-ripening seeds.

16 September 2010 Thursday	10:00 am – 3:00pm	Midewin SO (Horticulture Bldg)	Collecting seed from seed beds (morning) and wild populations (afternoon).
18 September 2010 Saturday	10:00 am-2:00 pm	Midewin SO (Welcome Center)	Ghosts of the Ammunition Plant Tour
18 September 2010 Saturday	5:00 pm	Hoff Road Trailhead	Bike by Twilight
25 September 2010 Saturday	8:30am check in 9:00– 2:30pm	Welcome Center	National Public Lands Day. Several activities, please see Flyer below
2 October 2010 Saturday	8:30 am	Call main line for meeting location	History on Horseback
2 October 2010 Saturday	5:00 pm	Midewin SO (Welcome Center)	Cemetery at Dusk
7 October 2010 Thursday	8:00 am – Noon	Midewin SO (Horticulture Bldg)	Invasive Plant Control
9 October 2010 Saturday	9:00 am – 2:30pm	River Road Seed Beds	Harvesting seed.
14 October 2010 Thursday	10:00 am – 3:00pm	Midewin SO (Horticulture Bldg)	Collecting seed from seed beds (morning) and wild populations (afternoon).
16 October 2010 Saturday	10:00 am	Midewin SO (Welcome Center)	What's with the Cows 
20 October 2010 Wednesday	3:30 pm	Midewin SO (Welcome Center)	Naturalist Badge for Webelos Scouts
23 October 2010 Saturday	9:00 am – 2:30pm	River Road Seed Beds	Collecting seed from River Road seed beds, and hopefully some wild seed from remnants.
30 October 2010 Saturday	4:30 pm 	Midewin SO (Welcome Center)	Trick-or-Treat Bunker Style

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For more information about the workdays and events listed or to RSVP contact Allison Hedden, Volunteer Coordinator at 815-423-2149 or ahedden@fs.fed.us.

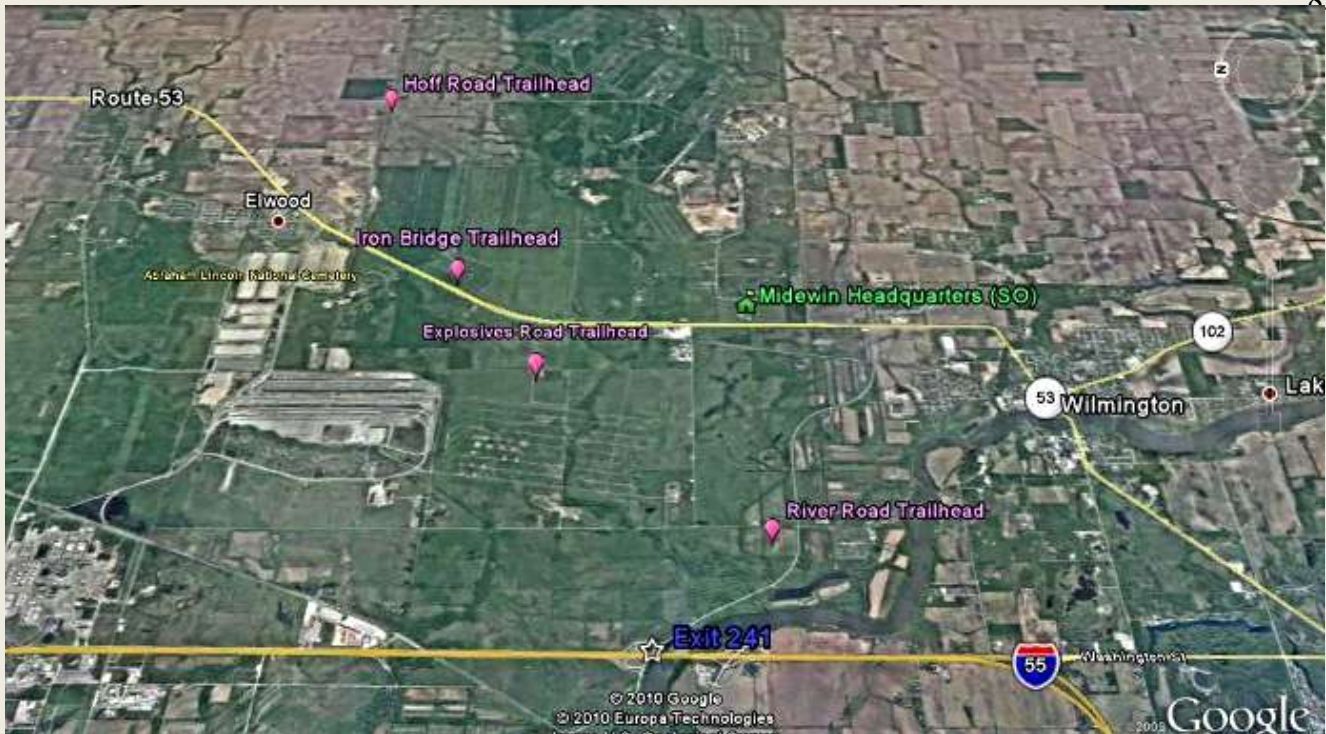
Knowing how many volunteers will attend a workday allows Midewin staff to better organize the workday, and we can inform you of any changes. *Workdays may be cancelled if extreme weather occurs (again, please call ahead).*

If you plan on staying for the entire workday, please bring your lunch. As always, Midewin will provide tools, safety gear, and water for volunteers. Children are welcome, but must be accompanied and supervised by a parent, guardian or chaperones (for educational groups). Volunteer groups are welcome to join our workdays; many hands make for light work. Please do not bring dogs or other pets to workdays.



Click for





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☆ Help Wanted: Trail Stewards

This opportunity is perfect for individual volunteers or groups that love hiking, protecting nature, restoration, constant learning, and an independent schedule.

Purpose: Make Midewin more user-friendly by improving hiking trails and protecting habitat from woody and invasive encroachment.

Responsibilities: Duties may include mowing, acquiring herbicide license to treat invasive species, repairing structures and installing signs, benches and tables. Report any trail improvement needs as we transition Midewin trails from interim to permanent.

Qualifications: Physical strength and endurance and ability to travel certain distances of trail.

Time Commitment: Commitment is flexible but we encourage a consistent routine about twice a month in the active season. Let us know if you are interested in managing a trail segment and working on your own schedule.

Training/Materials: An orientation and consistent communication of responsibilities is available. Safety gear, equipment, tools, and materials will be provided by Midewin.

Benefits: Feel ownership in Midewin natural areas and trails and improve recreational opportunities for visitors. Choose your favorite section of trail to manage and be proud of. Midewin Volunteer Staff receive the bimonthly Prairie Telegraph and an invitation to the annual Volunteer Recognition Banquet.

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National Public Lands Day

A National Environmental Education Foundation Program



Saturday, September 25, 2010

National Public Lands Day

is the nation's largest hands-on volunteer effort to improve and enhance the public lands that we all enjoy.

Projects Include

- Harvesting seed at River Road Seedbeds (ALL AGES WELCOME)
- Invasive removal at historic farmstead
- Wetland management / erosion control
- Invasive control at restoration site
- Trail bridge construction

Space is limited so please RSVP. Check in at 8:30am at Midewin's Welcome Center. Projects begin at 9 and finish at 12 or 2:30.

RSVP to Allison by September 17

to guarantee your
FREE LUNCH courtesy of the Midewin Alliance

**815-423-2149 or
ahedden@fs.fed.us**

Hike the Foxglove Tour Experience "a prairie under construction" while visiting the "Foxglove" restoration area of Midewin. Tours start at 9 and 1 and last 2 hours. Meet at the Welcome Center.

Foxglove Prairie Video:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MCB1VHFZ5T8>

☆ Get Involved with Mighty Acorns

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"Whoa, what is that thing?... "Hey, look at this!... "Mmm smell this"...and "I dare you to touch it" are some of most common things we hear from the youngsters that come to Midewin. These are exactly the questions and observations that volunteer mentors love to continue hearing from curious children. The Mighty Acorns Youth Stewardship program provides children with knowledge and activities that will encourage them to connect with nature.

Students from local schools participate in activities based on education, restoration, exploration, and stewardship. These activities are led by volunteer mentors that truly see the value in passing it on. This is a fantastic way to get generations together to share stories and learn from each other. We must keep the children excited about and invested in nature. There is no experience necessary to be a mentor because we provide a terrific training workshop for new volunteer instructors.

The fall training session date is Thursday, September 23. It will be from 10am-2pm starting at the Welcome Center.

If you are not available, there are other ways to get experience with the Mighty Acorns program so please inquire. Shifts are on weekdays for about 3 hours each and you may sign up for as many shifts you wish. For more information or to RSVP, please contact Allison Hedden at 815.423.2149 or email ahedden@fs.fed.us.

☆ Reminiscing with the Volunteer Staff

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This group of 70 young adults traveled from all over the US, Great Britain, and Canada for their Unitarian Universalist annual retreat and met at camp Shaw-was-nas-see in Manteno.

After the group coordinators chose the camp site, they admittedly wondered "what are we going to do in the middle of nowhere?" Well, as soon as Tegan called me, I was quickly able to answer that question!

Long story, short...we have several new piles of invasive brush and 1600 new leadplants planted at the seedbeds. Thank you to our licensed volunteer herbicides for keeping up with the stump treatments.

Other than a speeding ticket, a couple of bee stings and a close call with poison ivy, the group appeared to really enjoy the experience. And somehow their visit landed on the most beautiful day within two weeks.

Thanks a bunch! Hope to see you again.





Trinity Services from Wilmington have been contributing time and laughter at Midewin about twice a year for several years now. This summer they started this rain garden at the headquarters by planting things like swamp milkweed, green bulrush, marsh blazing star, marsh aster, sneezeweed and lots of sedges. It will probably look pretty weedy for a couple of years but eventually it will look as fresh and colorful as the other areas this group has helped landscape at the Welcome Center. Thanks Trinity! See you in the fall.

Upward Bound students were able to visit in July to help finish the rain garden project started by Trinity Services, above. Under the umbrella of the DIME child foundation, the Upward Bound program reaches out to Chicago Public School students that are potentially first-generation college students. According to their website, 68% of Upward Bound student GPAs have increased since they started the program and 90% have an increased interest in attending college. We were not that surprised to see many of the students make that transition from apprehensive to adventurous in just a matter of an hour or so. About half of the group even climbed the grassy bunker and walked in to the prairie with me. I heard observations like tall, wild, colorful, and much cooler in temperature than standing on the pavement. One student even told me he may consider being an 'environmentalist.' Well anyway, maybe most could not wait to get home and take a shower, but we are so thankful for all their efforts and contribution. Thanks everyone! I dare you to come and visit again. This time bring a bike!



☆ Tour Program Descriptions

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The U.S. Forest Service will offer FREE public tours May through October featuring the natural and cultural history of the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie.

Advanced registration is required. Leave a message at (815) 423-2170 or email LBazan@fs.fed.us. Please leave contact info in case we need to contact you about cancellations or changes to the tour schedule.



Tour Assistant, Marcia Baumgartner, shares information about Klingler cemetery

Tour Descriptions and Schedule
<http://www.fs.fed.us/mntp/visiting/tours.htm>

Midewin has a variety of volunteer opportunities year round, come and find one that fits your style or feel free to offer your own hobby:

Environmental Education
 Mighty Acorn Instructor
 Welcome Center Host
 Interpreter/Ambassador
 Trail maintenance
 Construction
 Woodworking
 Prairie planting
 Seed cleaning
 Seed harvest

Ecological Monitoring
 Invasive control
 Research
 Landscaping
 Office Assistant
 Art/Design
 Photography
 Editing documents
 Oral History Recorder
 And more...

To unsubscribe to this newsletter please contact Allison Hedden at 815.423.2149 or use this link. I will also welcome any articles you would like to submit.

<mailto:ahedden@fs.fed.us?subject=unsubscribe me please>